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THE MUSLIM VOICE

JUMADA at-THANI 1416
SEPTEMBER 1995

A paper for Muslims produced by Toronto MSAs United

Volume 3, Issue 1

Awareness and Balance emphasized at MSA Orientation

Orientating Towards the Future

By Hussein Hamdani

On Saturday August 19, 1995 a core group of experienced, upper year, University Muslim students, embarked on Toronto MSA United's first University and College Orientation Day.

The goal of this much needed forum was to "educate, inform, and warn Islamic youth of the trials and tribulations of university life - especially in coping with the first year."

Muslims: Successes and Realities

As it stands today, Muslims in Canada are the most educated religious minorities anywhere in the world. In fact 1 in 5 Muslims in Canada holds a university degree.

Unfortunately, there are couple of realities that must be addressed.

First, many of the Muslims who hold degrees must accept joy employment at levels much more subservient than their education would permit them.

Either the Muslims do not act aggressively in finding employment in areas where they have specialized or (and most likely) the subtle racism and discrimination found in the Canadian workplace will not allow the advancement of visible-minority-Muslims.

Secondly, the Canadian University system, on the one hand educates the Muslim masses, but on the other hand is probably the single-most effective weapon in derailing Muslims from the *Sirat al-Mustaqim* (the Straight Path) and into the realm of the *Jahiliyya* (Ignorance).

The sad reality is, for first years entering university, they are overwhelmed at the amount of *fitna* surrounding them, that for some, they let their guards down and succumb to peer pressure at the encouragement and enjoyment of *Shaitan*.

The biggest test yet

For many university bound-Muslims this is the biggest test they have had to face yet.

For the first time they are living away from home, there is no parent supervision, no curfew, nor responsibilities, they are introduced to vast amounts of freedom hitherto inexperienced.

"You shall certainly be tried and tested in your possessions and in your personal selves; and you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you...But if you persevere patiently and guard against evil, then that will be a determined factor in all affairs. (Qur'an, 3:186)

Sadly, many Muslims in university and college fail miserably these tests and trials. It is this phenomenon that stirred upper-year Muslims to embark on a education-type forum to help yet-inexperienced younger brothers and sisters cope with the pressures of first year and for warn them of the task at hand.

Saif Syed, a Waterloo student and the main organizer of this forum, remarked that what inspired him to conduct this orientation day was his firm belief that Muslim youths need to be gathered up before they enter university and be introduced to upper year Muslims in their respective institutions.

Youths must be warned about the dangers of living in residence, freely mixing with boys/girls and socializing in bars. He continues, saying that one of the reasons for having such an event is the fact that most parents do not properly warn their children about the dangers of living in a university environment.

Clueless Parents

They are hardly at fault, however, since the majority of them have no clue about the trials we face when we leave home for school for the first time.

"Therefore it is our responsibility to save the future generation of Muslim students, if we sit idle, the blame lies on us."

Alhumdulillah (all Praise is due to Allah), the Orientation Day was a major success. In total, nearly 80 Muslims gathered to work and learn from various older Muslim students.

In all there were two sets of three workshops conducted with approximately 15-20 first years in each workshop. Each workshop had two facilitators who were upper year students from various universities.

The first set of workshops had both brothers and sisters discussing such subjects like handling academic workload, what kind of friends to look for and the importance of the MSA, stressing the essentially of joining this Muslim students' movement.

Time management and balance

I had the opportunity to walk around and join in the respective workshops while in progress and I made a personal note that, although the facilitators came form various universities the commonality in their advice was consistent.

A repeating theme that was emphasized was the concept of effective and efficient time-management. The hypothesis was put forth that if Muslims could *balance* themselves, then they would

(Continued on page 3)

Imam Jamil Al-Amin arrested unfairly

Muslim Organizations Call for Investigation

By CAIR

On August 7, Imam Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin, formerly known as H. Rap Brown, was arrested in connection with a July shooting. At the time of the arrest, law-enforcement authorities, including the FBI's Joint Counterterrorism Task Force and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), claimed the shooting victim had identified Imam Al-Amin as the assailant.

The shooting victim, who attended the news conference, now says he does not know who wounded him and that the police pressured him into making the identification.

The Denying Assailant

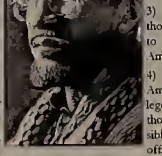
News articles in both *The Atlanta Journal* and *The New York Times* quote the shooting victim as saying he repeatedly insisted to the police that he did not see who shot him and that it was the police who first presented him with the name and photograph of Imam Al-Amin.

The alleged complainant also said he was threatened with legal charges if he did not agree to identify the Imam as the person who shot him.

Islamic Groups Have Questions

On August 28, several national Islamic organizations held a news conference in Washington, DC, to call for an Justice Department investigation into the recent arrest of Imam Jamil Al-Amin.

The groups represented at the news conference included ISNA, American Muslim Council (AMC), the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), and CAIR. Imam Al-Amin was also in attendance.



The joint statement released at the news conference read as follows:

We... wish to express our deep concern over the recent arrest of Imam Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin, one of the Muslim community's leading figures. The manner of his arrest for aggravated assault and the events that have transpired since the arrest indicate that there is apparently much more to this incident than has been revealed so far. We have several questions about the handling of this case:

1) Why were agents of the FBI, the FBI's Domestic Counterterrorism Task Force and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms involved in a case that the police themselves described as a routine aggravated assault?

2) Why was the victim in this case, as he himself has stated and *The Atlanta Journal* reported, threatened with legal charges if he failed to identify Imam Al-Amin as his assailant? And why did authorities refuse to accept the victims repeated statements that he did not see who the assailant was?

3) Why would the authorities in Atlanta wish to implicate Imam Al-Amin in this case?

4) Why was Imam Al-Amin weeks after the alleged incident, even though he is easily accessible to law enforcement officials at his public place of business? Why was he arrested in his car and not called in for questioning at police facilities?

These and other questions must be answered by those who in a position of authority over those involved in the incident.

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The Muslim Voice Expands!

The Muslim Voice is going from 8 to 12 pages a month starting with this issue. We have added new sections: News and Features. There are other sections on the way, such as a monthly Question & Answer page.

We are expanding our circulation and distribution to cover more MSAs across North America. We are also recruiting more writers and Staff.

For more information, please contact:
Faraz Rabbani (416-695-1636) or frabbani@epas.utoronto.ca

The Muslim Voice: a paper for Muslims by MSA students.

TABLE of CONTENTS

Why I chose Islam: Jemima Goldsmith, Imran Khan's Wife, Explains	3
News on MSA's	4
Cycling across Canada for Bosnia	4
FROSH YEAR: Full of Realizations, Challege and Hope	5
FEATURES: Personal Development on Campus	6-7
How to Develop Your Iman: Based on Speech by Abdul Malik Mujahid	8
The Nature of Western Society: Abdullah Hakim at Dawah Seminar	9
The Remembrance of Allah (*Dhikr*)	10
Islamic 'Aqidah: You & Your Beliefs	11

Aspirations and Purposes

Where to direct our hopes

EDITORIAL COMMENT

September. We hear of high hopes, and dreams. Sage advice comes to us from an Arab author:

"*When you embark on an honourable venture,*

Be not content with aiming below the stars."

The poem continues, but the import is clear: when we aim, we should aim high.

The opposite of this is despair, which renders out actions fruitless. One of the Companions of the Prophet (SAW), Abdullah ibn Masud said about this:

"Ruin is caused by two traits: pride and despair. Happiness cannot be attained without effort and struggle. A vain person does not make any effort because he believes that he is perfect; a despairing person does not make any effort because he believes it is useless."

So the idea of balance is introduced; we aim high and struggle, but without pride and without despair.

A crucial question remains: what are we aiming for? We will be striving for something in this life; what will it be?

The Ideal

It is said that this life is like a garden, which is "cultivated for its fruits in the next world... the heart is like the earth, that belief is like the seeds, and that acts of obedience are like plouging up the soil and clearing it for planting and digging channels to bring water to it."

"The heart which is in love with this world is like barren earth in which seeds cannot sprout. The Day of Resurrection is like the day of harvest, and no one reaps what he did not sow. No seed other than the seed of belief can grow, and belief rarely brings forth any fruit if the heart is rotten and lacking morality." (*Purification of the Soul, p. 121*)

If all we will reap is the fruits of belief, then we must develop an understanding of the purpose of our life. What is belief? Why are we here?

Allah tells us why we are here in the Qur'an:

"Blessed is He in whose Hand is the Dominion and who has the Power to do all things; who has created death and life, so that He may test you which of you is best in deeds." (67:1-2)

"And I created not the *jinns* and men except that they worship me." (51:56)

Life

This concept of worship (*ibadah*) is comprehensive. Syed Qutb says, "the Islamic way of life is nothing but the realization of worship from beginning to end." And, "No human action can be called worship of Allah unless it is done for the sake of Allah alone, and with a recognition that He alone deserves to be worshipped."

End

This worship, our purpose of life, takes us somewhere. Our earthly life has an end, and there is a life after this. Our journey in this life determines our sojourn in the hereafter. Of this, most of us are heedless. As if to rouse us from our heedlessness, and to awaken us to the Reality, Allah tells us that:

"Truly, the righteous will be in delight [of Paradise]: On Thrones (of Dignity) will they command a sight (of all things): You will recognize in their Faces the beaming brightness of Bliss. Their thirst will be slaked with Pure Wine sealed: whose seal will be Musk: and for this let those aspire who have aspirations." (83: 22-26)

For this let those who aspire have aspirations. Can there be a hope more high than this? The poem I quoted you at the beginning was incomplete:

"When you embark
on an honourable venture,
Be not content
with aiming below the stars.
For the taste of death in a paltry matter
Is like the taste of death
in a significant matter.
The cowards will see
their cowardice as reason,
And that is the treachery
of the depraved disposition."

And one cowardice is to run away from the Truth when will are confronted by it. The Qur'an talks about this:

"Then what is the matter with them that they turn away from admonition? As if they were frightened asses, fleeing from a lion!. No, each one of them wants to be given scrolls (of revelation) spread out!. By no means! But they fear not the Hereafter. No, this surely is an admonition: Let any who will keep it in remembrance!. But none will keep it in remembrance except as Allah wills. He is the Lord of Righteousness and the Lord of Forgiveness." (74: 49-56)

So let us, truly, keep the Hereafter in remembrance, wherein lies a goal truly worth aspiring for, and understand the purpose of our life here.

Allah, grant us the best in this life and in the hereafter, and save us from the torment of the Fire. Allah, grant us the sweetness of faith and make us callers to the Truth rightly guided.

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The Muslim Voice

Growth, Direction and Subscription

Plans for the Future

We have sought to bring out a distinct, fresh and relevant paper. As part of this, we been constantly trying to improve our quality. For the 1995-96 school year, we:

- have increased our size from 8 to 12 pages
- are expanding our circulation to *more* MSAs across North America
- have a more structured newspaper, by the creation of Features, News, and Q&A sections

To subscribe

We can mail *The Muslim Voice* to any interested MSA or community. Our price per month, including mailing, is: 25 copies are $5; 50 copies are $10; 100 copies are $15; 200 copies are $20; 300 copies are $28; 400 copies per month are $35. Price include mailing and are in US$ for the US and Cdn$ for

A Letter to The Editor

Marriage and the Islamic Activist

Young Muslims who want to get married know how tough it is. Finding a suitable candidate, the process, people demands.. it is unreal!

The thing that strikes me is how unIslamic our outlook on life is. People choose marriage partners for all things but Islam. And parents have even stronger biases.

Money and choice of career are the biggest of these biases. Unless you are rich and/or a doctor, you are in the back-benches of the marriage circus.

If in all this, you want to commit yourself to Islamic activism or knowledge-seeking, things are even more difficult. If your family can't support you financially, you have the tough choice of either forgetting about your Islamic activism and concentrating on making the sort of money that will make you a "suitable boy" for someone's daughter, or you can continue your Islamic work and forget about marriage for a long time.

Both situations are unacceptable. Both exist because our outlook and criteria are not fully based on Islam. Is a good Muslim only a nice doctor or professional from the "right background"?

Given such realities, many good people are turned away from their Islamic activism. Some slip in terms of their *deen* itself; others are lost to Islamic work.

The community has much responsibility in all this. The importance of early marriage and the Islamic concept of marriage hasn't been effectively promoted in society.

And the community has done little tangibly in terms of making marriage, especially for the less well-off Muslims, easier.

All of us, parents and children, should evaluate this situation we are in as a community, where large numbers of people are unmarried and in serious risk of falling prey to wrong temptations, and seek our real solutions.

Muslims should not accept realities: we should always strive for ideals. And in the Islamic model of marriage there is the ideal model for a healthy building block for a strong community.

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O Allah! Grant us the sweetness of iman and make us callers to the Truth, rightly guided.

Why I chose Islam

Jemima Goldsmith, Imran Khan's wife, explains

When Jemima Goldsmith, the 21-year-old daughter of billionaire Sir James, married Imran Khan she embraced not only the world's most handsome sportsman but also the Muslim faith, taking the name Haiqa. Here, she tells us why...

By Jemima Goldsmith

THE media present me as a naive, besotted 21-year-old who has made a hasty decision without really considering the consequences - thus effectively condemning herself to a life of interminable subservience, misery and isolation.

Although I must confess I have rather enjoyed the various depictions of a veiled and miserable "Haiqa Khan" incarcerated in chains, the reality is somewhat different. Contrary to current opinion, my decision to convert to Islam was entirely my own choice and in no way hurried.

Conversion and Study

Whilst the act of conversion itself is surprisingly quick - entailing the simple assertion that "there is only one God and Mohammed is His Prophet" - the preparation is not necessarily so speedy a process.

In my case, this began last July, whilst the actual conversion took place in early February - three months before the *Nikah* in Paris. During that time, I studied in depth both the Quran and the works of various Islamic scholars (Gai Eaton, the Bosnian president Alia Izetbegovic, Muhammad Asad) , thus giving me ample time to reflect before making my decision.

What began as intellectual curiosity slowly ripened into a dawning realisation of the universal and eternal truth that is Islam. In the statement given out a week ago, I particularly stressed that I had converted to Islam entirely "through my own convictions". The significance of this has been largely ignored by the press.

The point is that my conversion was not, as so many have assumed, a pre-requisite to my marriage. It was entirely my own choice

No Compulsion

Religiously speaking, there was absolutely no compulsion for me to convert prior to my marriage. As it explicitly states in the Quran, a Muslim is permitted to marry from "the People of the Book" - in other words, either a Christian or a Jew.

Indeed, the Sunnah - which describes the life of the Prophet - shows that the messenger of Islam himself married both a Christian and a Jew during his lifetime. I believe that much of this hostility towards my marriage and conversion stems from widespread misconceptions about an alien culture and religion.

Not only is there a huge gulf between the Western view of Islam and the reality, but there is in some cases also a significant distinction between Islam based directly on the Quran and the Sunnah and that practised by some Islamic societies.

During the last year I have had the opportunity to visit Pakistan on three separate occasions and have observed Islamic family life in practice. Thus, to some extent I now feel qualified to judge for myself the true role and position of women in the religion.

At the risk of sounding defensive, I would like to point out that Islam is not a religion which subjugates women whilst elevating men to the status of minidictators in their own homes.

I was able to see this first-hand when I met Imran's sisters in Lahore: they are all highly educated professional women. His oldest sister, Robina, is an alumnus of the LSE and holds a senior position in the United Nations in New York. Another sister, Aleema, has a master's degree in business administration and runs a successful business; Uzma is a highly qualified surgeon working in a Lahore hospital, whilst Rani is a university graduate who co-ordinates charity work.

They can hardly be seen as "women in chains" dominated by tyrannical husbands. On the contrary, they are strong-minded independent women - yet at the same time they remain deeply committed both to their families and their religion.

In Theory and Practice

Thus, I was able to see - in theory and in practice - how Islam promotes the essential notion of the family unit without subjugating its female members. I am nevertheless fully aware that women are sometimes exploited and oppressed in Islamic societies, as in other parts of the world.

Judging by some of the articles which have appeared in the press, it would seem that a Western woman's happiness hinges largely upon her access to nightclubs, alcohol and revealing clothes; and the absence of such apparent freedom and luxuries in Islamic societies is seen as an infringement of her basic rights.

However, as we all know, such superficialities have very little to do with true happiness. Besides, without in any way wishing to disparage the culture of the Western world, into which I was born, I am more than willing to forego the transient pleasures derived from alcohol and nightclubs; and as for the clothes I will be wearing, I find the traditional shalwar kameez (tunic and trousers) worn by most Pakistani women far more elegant and feminine than anything in my wardrobe.

Finally, it seems futile to speculate on my chances of marital success. Marriage, as Imran's father has been quoted as saying, is indeed "a gamble".

However, when I see that in a society based on family life the divorce rate is just a fraction of that in European or American society, I cannot see that my chances of success are any less than if I had chosen to marry a Westerner.

I am all too aware of the enormous task of adapting to a new and radically different culture. But with the love of my husband and the support of his family I look forward to the challenge wholeheartedly, and would like to feel that people wish me well. Whilst I do appreciate the genuine concerns of many, I must confess to feeling somewhat bewildered by all of the commotion.

This article originally appeared in The Sunday Telegraph.

Orientation Day

(Continued from page 1)

have a better opportunity to advance themselves in academia.

This means that one cannot be a 24-hour student in the libraries, but rather must be able to conduct some aspects of a social life.

With this in mind there was a natural flow into the second set of workshops These workshops were single gender and tackled issues such as: peer pressure examples, Frosh week, extracurricular activities, residence life, living off campus and social stress and Peer Pressure.

In between the two workshops was a delicious barbecue lunch and *Zuhr* prayers on the grass outside.

Finally, there were career workshops conducted in which experienced upper year students in respective fields discussed the prerequisites needed to join the that particular field.

The areas covered were: English, Medicine (the largest turnout), Mass media, Economics, Political Science (my personal favourite), Teaching, Business and finally Law (conducted by members of the new and growing Canadian-Muslim Civil Liberties Association).

A Success

It was also a success for Toronto MSAs United, a council of MSAs in Toronto . We saw a small preview of the impressive potential the student Muslim community has once we pool our resources together.

As for the first years, Sadat Anwar who is registered at U of T Erindale campus, summed up the sentiments of most of the participants:

"It was simply very inspirational. I had no idea what first year would be like, now by brothers and sisters have helped me prepare not just for September in particular, but for my first year at university in general.

"I cannot believe this is the first year this orientation day is being offered. It was full of friendly and practical advice. It should be compulsory for every first year Muslim."

Insha'Allah the brothers and sisters who organized this day, along with the various MSA chapters who helped financially will continue their respective efforts to ensure that this Orientation Day becomes a logical and natural extension to the practices of pre-university and college preparation.

May Allah bless all those who attended. If anyone learned anything from this day, than all the praise is due to Allah, only the mistakes have been ours.

Hussein Hamdani is known by our computer's spell-checker as Hussie Herman. He graduated from McMaster U to U of Toronto, to do a Masters in Pol Sci.

Ibn Mas`ud said: "Ruin is caused by two traits: pride and despair. Happiness cannot be attained without effort and struggle. A vain person does not make any effort because he believes that he is perfect; a despairing person does not make any effort because he believes it is useless."

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5 SIGNS YOUR MSA HAS PROBLEMS

By Zia Baig

1. People think MSA stands for Muslim Singles' Association;
2. You have Exec Meetings at McDonald's during Ramadan, at lunch time.
3. The Dawah Table is known as the DuhWuh table, due to the standard answer given to all questions. ("Duh? Wuh?")
4. Your President is going out with your Vice-President.
5. Your President graduated in the Class of '67.

Islam Awareness Week 1995 "Islam: A Mercy for Humanity"

By Muna Jondy

Islam Awareness Week 1995 will insha'Allah be held November 13-17 across over one hundred university and college campuses in the United States and Canada

Islam Awareness Week (IAW) is aimed at introducing Islam on a unified platform to all university and college campuses across the United States and Canada

Before Islam Awareness Week, many MSAs had individually conducted similar *da'wah* activities; however, this year the event will be held at the same time on university campuses.

Such coordination and communication will, insha'Allah, prove to be more effective not only for IAW'95, but in future endeavors as well. Since the Islam Awareness Week resource packet was put together, a number of steps have been taken to make Islam Awareness Week (IAW) a permanent feature of every MSA chapter's annual activities.

An IAW Task Force has been formed which is currently working on promoting the concept of IAW and marketing it. Also we have worked on resource development including a data base of speakers, compiling an IAW archives, etc.

Volunteers are needed, please contact the IAW office for more information at (313)-213-0055 or email muna@umcc.umich.edu.

Theme and Tips

This year's theme is "Islam: A Mercy To Mankind." During this week lectures on Islam should be held revolving around this theme. Besides the usual lectures, many MSAs in the past have utilized radio talk shows, cultural fairs/art galleries, game shows, and movies as effective methods of increasing awareness on campus.

Each MSA is encouraged to contact the local press (newspapers, TV news stations) and ask them to cover the event. Writing editorial page articles in college newspapers is also recommended.

Islam Awareness Week '95 will not only educate and inform the non-Muslim population on campus, but will encourage the many inactive Muslim students to share their skills and take part in future Islamic activities. Islam Awareness Week will insha'Allah strengthen each MSA and train students to be more active in serving Islam.

Muna Jondy is coordinating IAW this year.

MSA National: Vision, Mission and Projects

The MSA bases its conduct on Islam, as embodied in the Qur'an and the Sunnah and accepts Islam as the only true way of life one which can bring happiness and well-being, and which can enthuse the world with a spirit of brotherhood and unity.

Vision

To be the medium through which Islam will be the active, progressive force on University and College campuses.

Mission & Goals

To seek the pleasure of Allah through *Iqamat ad-deen* (establishment of the *deen*) as stated in the Quran and Sunnah.

To this end, we will:

1. Provide for a systematic program of Islamic education (*Tarbiyah*) of Muslim students.

2. Improve communications and coordination among MSAs at all levels.

3.Facilitate the provision of services and resources geared toward the campus community.

4 Develop and maintain a responsive and financially stable organization.

5. Foster a spirit of cooperation, unity and a common sense of purpose among MSAs and with other Islamic organizations, *InshaAllah.*

Some MSA National Projects and Programs

1. Foreign Students Handbook

Coming out shortly, this will prove to be priceless, Insha'Allah, for those foreign students who come to the US and Canada for the first time and find themselves in the midst of an American campus.

2. Free Literature

Great for Dawahl Just call the MSA Office in D.C. to receive samples Free!

3. Speakers List

The Speakers List, accessible through the MSA Net, provides you with an extensive list to choose from, as well as their contact information.

4. National Newsletter

The MSA Link, MSA National's Newsletter, is going to be coming out regularly, and will be an excellent way to keep abreast of the national MSA scene.

5. MSA Handbook and other Resources

The *Starter's Guide*, coming out by mid-October, is the first step in a line of future MSA National publications focussed on helping MSAs operate more effectively.

6. Islam Awareness Week Resources

IAW Resources include an updated Handbook with vital information for publicity, networking, fundraising, and other necessities to make IAW beneficial on your campus.

7. Sample Chapter Constitution

A model constitution which your chapter can adopt without having to undergo the tedious task of sitting down and writing a constitution yourself.

8. MSA Database of Addresses

E-mail fevens@qucis.queensu.ca

9. Zonal Conferences

MSA National sponsors zonal conferences.Plans are in the works in most of the zones to also sponsor retreats and smaller conferences throughout the course of the school year. Several conferences have been held over the last two years by the zonal and regional MSA councils.

10. Tax Exempt Status

As a member organization of MSA National, your chapter will be able to claim tax exempt status.

11. A National Archives

MSA has been working to collect and preserve as much material as possible so that none of us have to reinvent the wheel.

As you plan your events, know that you have access to a lot of information that people before you have worked on.

12. MSA Conference Guide

A guide for those who find themselves having to organize a conference or a retreat for the first time. Although other material is available on the subject, this guide has been specifically geared to fulfill the needs of MSA.

13. MSA Net

MSA Net is sponsored by MSA National. The Net provides a forum for intellectual debates and for publicity of events.

14. MSA-Org Net

This is open solely to a representative from MSA Chapters. The purpose is to network, share information, publicize MSA events, and provide a forum wherein issues pertaining to MSA may be discussed There are also many regional nets.

For more information on MSA National, please e-mail Mohamed Salem at ix62a@gwvm.gwu.edu

One Man's Mission for the Children of Bosnia

By Shiraz Sheikh

As we speak, Housam Kabalan of Human Concern International is on a cross-Canada cycling tour to raise public awareness and funds for the distressed children of Bosnia.

Reports released last year by the Bosnian government indicate that more than 40% of the children of Sarajevo have been wounded and 72% have been left homeless. Today, these numbers have increased

This two-man mission, consisting of Housam Kabalan, who is the lone cyclist, along with Wael Zahab, who accompanies him in a van, started on June 15 in St. John's, Newfoundland and will end in September 12 in Victoria, British Columbia. The whole trip will have lasted about three months, covering over 10,000 kilometres.

They were met by the children of the Islamic Foundation of Toronto on July 12, who presented them with $300 which they raised themselves, as well as letters they wrote to the children of Bosnia, which will be forwarded to Bosnia by Human Concern International.

Housam was thankful and surprised by the kind reception that he and his colleague were getting in Toronto. In one situation his bike was repaired free of charge by Broadway Cycle, after the owner found out about their cause.

Human Concern International, a charitable organization based in Ottawa, is helping Kabalan in his mission by providing him support. The Muslim communities in different areas are asked to contact Human Concern International to inquire about the date of their arrival in the respective cities.

Projects by HCI in Bosnia at present are: 1) Safe-Women Project which provides counselling and other care services to the victims of rape; 2) Agro-packages Project; 3) Child Support Program which involves continual financial assistance for their medical, educational and basic needs.

For more information or to contribute: Human Concern International, P.O. Box 3984, Station C, Ottawa Ontario, K1Y 4P2, Tel. (613) 742-5948, FAX (613) 742-7733.

MSA CZUS: The Way Forward

Summarized from MSA Link report

By Nusheen Ameenuddin

Alhamdulillah, the Central Zone has long been one of the most active zones in the MSA.

In order continue this, we need set specific goals for CZ US that will help us attain our objectives. The following are some preliminary goals for the CZ

1. OEVELOPMENT OF THE CZ

The CZ is active in the northern region, and is beginning to pick up speed down south as well. For example, the northern states held a Qur'an seminar earlier this year which was well attended The MSA's in Texas held their very first conference recently The theme was "The Rise of MSA in Texas" and included sessions on Qur'an, political action, and MSA

The MSA's that need more development are in the middle region, including Kansas and Missouri, as well as the southern region including Mississippi and Arkansas. Due to the smaller, Muslim populations in these areas, large-scale activities are a challenge and combined activities are difficult because of distance Enchancing communication is the key

If we can progress steadily southward, developing and linking up MSA's in less developed areas, we can *Insha'Allah* strengthen the zone. Even in areas where there are few Muslims, if we establish a Regional Base MSA, it will enhance communication in the zone, give more effective service and resources to MSAs

2. RECOROS

I want to keep a detailed record of activities in the zone. This would not only serve as a chronicle of activity, it would also help other chapters develop ideas for their MSA's and maybe enhance the activities.

3. TREASURY

One of my goals is establishing a CZ treasury In order to be more self-sufficient, we need to have a direct source of funding for activities. To do this, we will need to have fundraisers throughout the zone. *Insha'Allah*, the treasury will allow for more regional activities and projects.

Other Goals

Some other more general goals for include more collaboration with other organizations, more participation by chapters for IAW, a CZ conference that attracts Muslims from *all* regions of our zone, and more training programs for MSA's.

I welcome your input, because knowing your specific concerns and integrating your ideas into the CZ vision, is the only way to be a responsive, efficient representative. So please contact me with any comments, criticisms, or further questions about the CZ at email: nusheen@ksuvm.ksu.edu.

Nusheen Ameenuddin is MSA Central Zone USA Rep, and on The Muslim Voice Staff.

MSA ONTARIO WINTER CAMP 1995

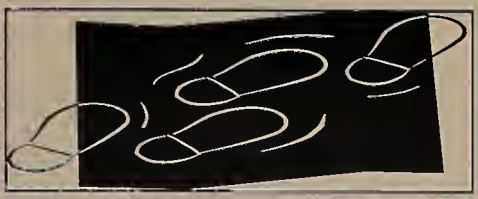
***InshaAllah*, a two-day MSA Ontario Winter Camp is in the works for the Winter Break, . It will focus on those knowledge and skill areas that may enable us to become effective Islamic workers and run efficient MSAs.**

For more information, e-mail: frabbani@epas.utoronto.ca or call: Iqbal Ahmed at 416-596-8939.

FROSH Year

A Year of Realizations, Challenge and Hope

By Nina Umar



First year turns out to be what you make it to be. However your year turns out, it will give you insight into yourself and your future. Most importantly, though, I strongly feel that it prepares you as a student of life.

Brick. Huge. Very 70's and very unappealing to the eye. But, I had no choice. So I took a deep breath, pulled open the door and walked in. The code MP103 rattled in my brain as I tried to decide which corridor to go through. Follow the crowd. Look like you know where you are going. Sure enough, I spotted an small, black 103 stamped on a set of large, orange doors.

Walking through those doors, I felt like a lost soul in a sea of strangers. Just find a seat and you'll be okay. I had the urge to ask if I was in the right place. Who to ask? Try the person next to you. The seat's empty. Okay. This is not a problem. Look around you. There's someone with the text for this course. This is beginning to look okay. I don't see any recognizable Muslim sisters. I will have to fly this course solo for now.

That was my first morning of lectures. It was my first year at the University of Toronto. It was a year in which I realized many things about myself and others, and I learned a lot about life.

One of the first things that I realized was that I was a FROSH- fresh out of high school. "Oh great!" I thought. "I've been here one week and already I've been labelled."

I really didn't know what the term meant FROSH. Once again I was at the bottom of the academic ladder. This time, though, it was different. The rules had changed. For starters, I didn't have to worry about making it to class before the Anthem or have my homework checked by my teacher. I didn't even have to worry about absences. But, I didn't have friends with whom to eat lunch with or walk home.

I discovered that racing from Calculus in Lash Miller to Humanities in the Larking Building was different from rushing from English to Chemistry at school.

Atmosphere

The atmosphere was definitely new. I was no longer confined to the property of the school yard.

As most of my graduating class had expected, we were finally free from the halls and rules of high school.

Walking along St. George, I thought that there might be a spark of hope after all. I think that I am beginning to feel this freedom that we so much desired to gain. As I looked across the vast campus, I thought, "Nope, it's just the wind."

My academic career was now my academic life. I was no longer going to classes in a four-walled, solitary building - I was attending mind-defining sessions in the realm of a little city.

It dawned upon me that everything that I would learn, experience, accomplish and see in the next few years would structure the way I would live my life. The responsibility of my life was solely in my hands. I'd have to answer to *me* now, and I was not about to let myself down.

Throughout my life, motivation to do well in school came from many avenues: to make my parents proud, to find a niche in which to excel, personal satisfaction and, of course, to get to University.

The Candle of Faith

Though high school was a definite learning experience, what I learned during my first year at University changed me much more. For one, the candle of faith that had grown dim within me, had rekindled itself and the flame began to burn with the utmost determination. As the year progressed, I met new people and made many friends - a lot of whom were Muslims.

Through these friendships, I discovered that my Islamic well of knowledge was quite dry. This prompted me to learn more.

In my quest for seeking greater knowledge of Islam, I realized that religion was not that which was spoken with tongue, but that which was professed from the heart.

Islam was not a religion to me any more, it was a way of life. Somewhere deep inside me, I think I always did believe that, but it took me nineteen years to realize it.

As inspiring as I had found it to be, gaining knowledge involved a lot of work. I then knew that time-management skills were a definite asset. Whether I was ready or not, time was going to move forward.

Independence

First year is a heavy dose of independence. When times get hectic, no one is going to tell you to take a break, or to relax.

There is no one looking over your shoulder anymore. Your first year experience can be filled with fears, and anxiety. It can also be an experience of excitement, and challenge.

First year turns out to be what you make it to be. However your year turns out, it will give you insight into yourself and your future. Most importantly, though, I strongly feel that it prepares you as a student of life.

Nina Umar was a frosh last year at the University of Toronto.

First Year: a Year of Discoveries

By Fayyaz Ahmed

To say that going to university is a big change from high school is an understatement. I am now a second year science student and so far it has been an extraordinary experience.

Since grade thirteen, I was told by a lot of people that U of Toronto was not a good university to attend because of the enormous student population, lack of social atmosphere, and a very selfish, and arrogant attitude amongst the students.

Positive Effects

Ironically, I found that a lot of this has had a very positive effect on me. Because U of T is the largest university in Canada, this means that it also has the largest Muslim student population.

This made it very easy for me to meet other brothers in the same area of study as me, usually after attending *salah* (prayer) at the ISC or at the Robarts Library. I found it very useful to know senior brothers at the university who were in the same program as myself with similar career objectives.

This allowed me to get honest advice as to which program to enrol in, which courses to take(and not to take), and how to study.

Socializing

Since there is no room for socializing in-between classes, I have found myself studying and socializing with Muslims. This camaraderie has had a significant effect on me as well.

By being around Muslim friends,

I know that help is available should I ever need it, knowing that whoever I am asking for help is doing so for the sake of ALLAH (SWT) and not to extract a favour from me in the future.

Another valuable aspect of such friendships is that there is very little negative peer pressure. Instead of having the peer-pressures you would have if you were to be with non-Muslims(drinking, smoking, drugs, sex), you have the encouragement to pray salah, eat halal food, help one another, and learn about Islam.

Granted, no one here is an angel let alone an ideal Muslim but not everyone here is a devil either.

As an intelligent person, when you are at university you must make important decisions as to whom you hang out with, even amongst Muslims, because U of T has its share of non-practising Muslims.

If you want proof of this, just take a look at how many of the Muslims on campus come out to pray.

Unlike high school, I will cherish the friends that I have at U of T long after I graduate, because it will be these friends that INSHA-ALLAH will help me succeed in this life and in the hereafter.

Fayyaz Ahmed is (in)famous for the way he wears his baseball cap.

The Prophet, `alaihi as-salatu was-salam, said:
"Allah makes the way to the Garden easy
for whoever treads a path in the search of knowledge."
(reported in Sahih Muslim)

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FEATURES

Personal Development on Campus

FEATURES: a new monthly addition to The Muslim Voice

You have Arrived.

Don't Look Back

By Rahat Kurd

Eight summers ago I wrote an article eerily similar to this one. I was entering Queen's University that September, and QUMSA had asked me to say a few words on my expectations for life as a frosh for their newsletter, *The Quest* (Imagine, eight years ago. Dot matrix printers. Tories in office. No one had ever heard of political correctness, Salman Rushdie's bodyguards or Srebrenica.)

I remember trying hard to convey a tone that was both offhandedly comical and smugly pious. You know. Hip yet committed. No one who read it could escape thinking that this girl had it all worked out. The thing is that what she'd worked out was only in her head. While it looked great on paper - all sunny positives, not a hint of uncertainty; no room for questions - its perspective was hopelessly limited, since I had no experience to back it up.

The halls of learning would be shiny and wonderful, decked in Shakespeare, Canada's taxation system and the films of Sergei Eisenstein. Studying would be endlessly fascinating, all the friends I had would be like-minded Muslims, unfailingly motivated and dripping with integrity.

A nice way of describing my state of mind might be with the word brave. Were my sincere intentions, the fact that I loved my religion, enough preparation for school?

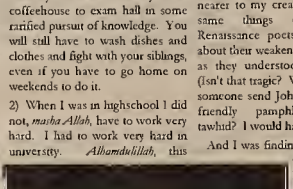
I think not. But if, by the Grace of Allah, it's eight years later and I am still alive and twice as certain that this set of principles we call Islam is quantifiably superior to all other belief systems, maybe it doesn't matter that the films of Sergei Eisenstein turned out to be grainily obscure and depressing. Maybe preparation is overrated.

Here are a few of the things I was unprepared for...

Unprepared

1) Starting first year does not, after all, mean that the Real World has granted you authorized leave for four years. You will not be gliding serenely from library to coffeehouse to exam hall in some rarified pursuit of knowledge. You will still have to wash dishes and clothes and fight with your siblings, even if you have to go home on weekends to do it.

2) When I was in highschool I did not, *masha Allah*, have to work very hard. I had to work very hard in university. *Alhamdulillah*, this realization is nicely humiliating. ("What? Study for a French test? A French test?!"



Hard Work

3) This realization is not, however, a great motivator. I had to work very hard even if I felt bored or depressed and only wanted to read art magazines and write poems and trail tragically around my room like Ophilia, sighing the names of little English flowers and generally denying that I was bored, depressed and couldn't care less for Canada's taxation system.

4) Being Muslim did not preclude my feeling this way.

Muslim Identity: Developing

5) Muslim identity turned out to be an evasive, fluid thing, slipping out from the narrow and unimaginative confines of orthodoxy I had placed on it in high school (hijab - check; five daily prayers - check; nice clothes at *jum'ah* and a lowered gaze - check).

Strangely, Islam began insinuating itself into the things I studied and thought about. I saw suddenly how logic, reason and love of learning were meant to strengthen my faith, make me feel nearer to my creator, while these same things caused major Renaissance poets great anguish about their weakened belief in God as they understood Him to be. (Isn't that tragic? Why didn't someone send John Donne a nice friendly pamphlet explaining tawhid? I would have, I tell you).

And I was finding subtle ways of writing about Islamic principles.

Humility, for example, could be seen as a necessary tool for ethical documentary filmmaking, since no director can lay claim to complete objectivity.

I was much more enthusiastic and motivated about school when I saw that I had access to an extraordinary and tuition-free set of ideas that I could use to generate new questions and contribute to knowledge instead of merely accepting the traditional parameters set in class. These possibilities in turn gave me more reasons to say *Alhamdulillah, Alhamdulillah, Alhamdulillah.*

Fluidity

6) That fluid, evasive thinking does not mean that all who share it will enjoy an effortless unity, loyalty or adherence to common goals. The first time you feel anger, bewilderment or thorough exasperation with some or all the Muslims at school can be startling and alienating. Which of us hasn't felt perfectly at peace and at one during, say, *Taraweeh* prayers in Ramadan?

All right then, which of us hasn't felt equally irritated by the views or mannerisms of the same group of Muslims on other occasions - at MSA meetings or in class - and wondered, who *are* these people? Do they really know me? Why am I spending so much time with them?

Usually, I was able to answer these questions satisfactorily to myself. But it took some thought. It does well for each of us to strive constantly to define the terms of our unity and collective goals, especially at the beginning of the year, rather than to assume we all mean the same thing by "Islam", "piety", or "good Muslim"

It does well not to be shocked and self-righteous when this process reveals our differences. It does further good for an MSA to anticipate such differences with calm deliberation, and for each of us to face any new environment with a healthy sense of humour.

Tests

7) One last thing I was unprepared for was waking up in the grey light of rainy Monday in November and realizing I'd missed Fajr and was late for my 8:30 Political Theory lecture and that I had three days to write two term papers and no clue how any of this happened. Don't ask me what I did next - it's irrelevant.

My point has to do with a certain question the Qur'an asks of us, you know the one, about whether we thought all we had to do was say "We believe" and that we wouldn't be tested - my answer to that question was a wry *Yes, I guess I thought that.* I think that was the real start of my higher education. Welcome to yours.

Rahat Kurd is a recovering slacker who lives in the city of Ottawa.

The Pitfalls of Student Life

By Zaffar Siddiqui

Well, *Alhamdulillah*, you've finally done it. You have finally made it to an institute of higher learning. For most people, this means attaining a degree or diploma of your choice, partying, and social-life upheavements - a cauldron of positive experiences mixed in with many trials.

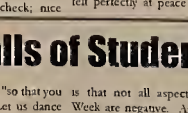
As Muslims, our agenda on a university or college campus is considerably different. Acts we know as disruptive to the most natural way of human life (*din al fitrah*) are made out to be the "norm" - a norm not unlike a lion trap.

To most, the dangerous lion trap appears to be an alluring plain of thatch, wild grass, and cool shade. As they begin to draw near, their feet slowly begin to sink until it is too late to avoid being caught in the trap.

So, what are these alluring pitfalls? What things should you try to avoid on campus "so that you can be successful"? Let us dance around the lion's pit if we may, *insha Allah*, so that we may open our eyes to some of these dangers.

Frosh Week

Whether you are living at home, off campus or in a residence, most, if not all first year students will come to know of the horrors of Frosh Week - a seven day stretch of events that cap off every school year, geared towards elevating frosh spirit. Looking back at Frosh Week (an unforgettable experience), certain words come to mind like humiliation rather than humility, and piety as opposed to piety. *SubhanAllah* (Glory be to Allah!). I had never witnessed so many consecutive days of drinking, dating, dancing and depravity (known as the 4 D's) in my life!



The important point to note here is that not all aspects of Frosh Week are negative. And although many of the things may be, you are not obliged to participate in them. The choice is ultimately your own - no one can force you. -

Besides, there are many healthy alternatives during your first week at school: you could beat the rush and buy your books, find good student groups to join, you can meet new people in other much more positive atmospheres, and perhaps participate in an M.S.A. (Muslim Students Association) frosh event or two (if they exist)!

By the way, during the school year, watch out for two other synonymous terms that you may hear: "homecoming" and "pep rally"

Residence

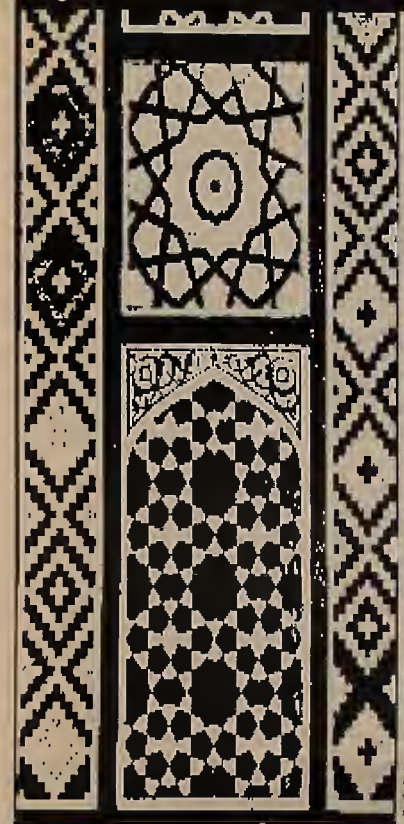
A large number of students who enter into their first year take the liberty of moving into residence. And why not? Afterall, it is convenient. It saves you the hastle of having to find off campus housing. It may save you from commuting from home. And it may also be safer if you plan to spend late evenings at the library. But with these pros come heavy cons, for residence life is far from being "Islamically conducive". "Hall parties", "floor parties", "floor crawls" - if you've heard one term then you've heard them all.

And the theme? Unfortunately for all residence activity it is usually "drink 'til you drop". Free mixing is quite prevalent in these areas of living as well (surprisingly, even in all-girl or all-guy residences) - and this "permissible" atmosphere may prove to be alluring to most people.

What to do?

So what can you do? If you don't live in an on-campus residence then don't worry too much. *Insha*

(Continued on page 7)



O ye who believe!
Fear Allah and be with those who are true (in word and deed). (9: 119)

Living Away From Home

By Saif Ullah Syed

"2.4 There is more to residence living than you think."

Residence Information Booklet, University of Waterloo

The above statement is a brief, yet accurate, description of what you should expect if you are leaving home for college, whether you live on-campus or not. The difference in living atmosphere is a factor that I had devoted little thought or planning to three years ago, when I began my first year. I was too excited about going to university and 'becoming independent'. Living arrangements, food, and keeping my Islamic morals were things that I had taken for granted while I was living with my parents. It was a shock to have to learn to deal with them myself.

"5.2 Residents must provide their own soap, towels, linens, and blankets..."

These are only a few of the essentials required. Also needed are toothbrushes, toothpaste, pillows, shampoo . . the list could go on forever. First year students should consult their mothers before they start packing. Don't worry, mothers like to do these things, and keeping them busy will help prevent them from crying when you leave. Two things that mothers seem to forget, and I always seem to run out of when I am busiest, are socks and underwear. Buy a lot - like good food, you can never have enough.

"6.10 Take small portions, cut food into small bites and eat slowly."

Food is a major problem for most Muslims living away from home. I have yet to see a residence hall that has a Halal menu. Consequently, Muslims often buy the vegetarian meal plan. Since basic spices like salt and pepper have not yet reached the residence kitchens, most of the food tastes like wet paper. One alternative is to learn how to cook for yourself. The variety and quality of food will be much better, no matter how inexperienced a cook you are. Pasta is a quick and convenient dish, which provides energy that will keep you active for hours. It is important to never neglect meals. Otherwise, your health will begin to suffer, which will affect study habits. However, physical nourishment is not the only care your body needs - the soul needs nourishment as well.

"2.1 Each resident has the right to engage in activities that are a part of university life."

Being away from home, you will find that you have much more spare time than you did in high school, especially at night and on weekends. The success of surviving your first year without facing severe social and academic stress depends on how you spend your time, including extra-curricular activities.

It is very easy to become entwined in the campus party environment and engage in activities that you would not dare to while living with your parents. The decision is up to you whether to resist the temptations of going to bars and clubs to drink and date - activities that a surprising number of Muslims take part in at university.

However, the majority of these people regret their actions when they reach the upper-years, and in many cases the emotional scars left from the party period take years to heal.

But don't worry, there are other cool, clean activities to enjoy on campus, such as joining organizations and playing sports. In addition, the university Muslim Students Association (MSA) provides a place where you could spend time Islamically.

At MSA functions you will be able to make other Muslim friends who have similar interests. Having Muslim will friends will help you in avoiding most of the social stress experienced during first year. Make Muslim friends. Make Muslim friends. Make Muslim friends. I cannot overemphasize the importance of this. It will save you a lot of guilt and depression later on.

Rez Life

Many of the problems faced in first year can be avoided if you refrain from living in residence. Living off-campus provides greater flexibility in spending spare time, without the added peer pressure from non-Muslims in residence halls. Moreover, most residences have a mandatory meal plan and do not permit cooking in the dorms, which is a disadvantage to Muslims who desire taste in their food. Taking these factors into account, as well as the immoral social atmosphere of residence, I recommend that first year students live off-campus with other Muslims. Regardless of where you live, plan and prepare carefully for both your physical and mental needs. Your career as a successful Muslim student depends on it.

Saif Ullah Syed recently organized a successful College & University Preparation Day, and is currently a 4th Year student at the University of Waterloo. His brother calls him...

The Pitfalls of Student Life

(Continued from page 6)

Allah, just keep the visits to a bare minimum.

As for those who are moving into residence - only stick to residence for its essentials - to sleep, to bathe, to pray (if no other alternative is left for you that is). Other than that, it is better for you to find other places to eat, study, socialize, and whatever else you do on a day-to-day basis.

The obvious red zones to avoid are also perhaps the most populated areas on any given campus.

That's right - the campus club is a weekend get-away for most (the weekend, mind you, for a college and university student begins on a Thursday).

Pub Muslims

Don't be surprised if your Muslim friends even ask you to join them at the local pub.

It is not uncommon, especially since the popular catch phrase is, "I don't go there to drink."

It doesn't matter what they say; there is absolutely no justification to go to a place where there is mass mixing of scantily clad people and where inebriation is the order of the day!

Organizations and Clubs

One outlet for a lot of students at a university or college campus is to join a student organization.

At the same time, one of the subtle dangers of student life is getting involved with the wrong people. With a plethora of different student groups on campus one must keep his or her guard.

It is important to make sure that any club or organization you join does not conflict with your Islamic morals and principles - no matter what the group is.

Some organizations may be run by Muslims or have a majority of members who are Muslim, but may hold events or have agendas which are contrary to your beliefs.

And watch out for fraternities, sororities and cults. There are many out there, and they are always attempting to recruit new victims on campus.

One way to avoid all these questionable or pernicious student clubs is to join the M.S.A. or whatever Muslim student group there is on your campus.

Involve yourself with those things which will strengthen you - pray with your fellow brothers and sisters daily and on the day of Jum'ah, join weekly study circles, attend lectures and social nights. No other student organization can provide you with an equal atmosphere. Remember, any association whose mandate is to serve and please Allah is no doubt better for you in the long run.

Friends

Perhaps the greatest danger you may face on a university or college campus is peer pressure.

This may be the direct result of the friends that you choose to make. For this reason, it is very important that one establishes a good network of friends and does not get caught up with the wrong people.

The best friends you can find are your fellow Muslim brothers and sisters. Make this one of your goals when going to university or college for the first time - to find and make new Muslim friends (the M.S.A. is a great resource for this!).

Be not Roman

One thing to remember when dealing with friends and others around you: "When in Rome, do NOT do as the Romans do!" unless you are certain that you are not going to end up in a compromising situation. And Allah Knows Best.

So let us pray to Allah (S.W.T.) for guidance so that we may steer clear of the hoi's trap that so many people fall into, *insha Allah*.

And let us also keep in mind a statement made by Allah's Messenger (S.A.W.):

It was related in *Sahih* Muslim that the Messenger of Allaah (S.A.W.) said: "Righteousness is good morality, and wrongdoing is that which wavers in your soul and which you dislike people finding out about."

Zaffar Siddiqui used to study at McMaster. He is now, somehow, at Ryerson.

Next Month: The Role of Students in Islamic Work

Upcoming Features

November:
Islam Awareness Week
December:
Jihad Around the World
January:
Ramadan
February:
Dawah / Coming to Islam
March:
Gender Interaction
April:
Marriage

Iman: living by it and developing

By Faraz Rabbani

What makes us Muslim is the *Shahada*, our declaration of faith. In it, we don't simply say we 'believe in Allah.' Rather, we *bear witness*, by saying *ashhadu an...* This is something important to keep in mind.

As Muslims, we put a lot of focus on the details of the second pillar of Islam, *Salah* (prayer), but rarely on the first pillar, the *Shahada*.

Similarly, many of us pay a lot of attention to the 'small Sunnahs' of the Prophet (SAW). This, like paying attention to the details of *salah*, is very important: it shows a love for the Prophet.

But, it is equally important to *live* as the Prophet did, and to make the Prophetic way our way. If we see how the Prophet lived, we will realize that his life was a living embodiment of *iman*.

When we think of *iman*, we should think of the Prophet, his life and his mission. The *shahada* is an adoption of a mission to bear witness to the truth of Islam. If we are not living by this *shahada*, then our iman is weak. Islam, then, can be thought of as a mission to fulfill the requirements of *iman*.

Strengthening Iman

Iman is a variable quantity. It can go up through certain actions, such as *sabr* (patience), *salah*, remembrance of the hereafter, reading Qur'an, fasting, and by living the life of the mission that the *shahada* entrusts upon us; it can also go down, such as when we are heedless, when we forget Allah (SWT), when we act contrary to the Qur'an and Sunnah, when we succumb to our temptations and when our actions go against the implications of the *shahada*.

The Qu'ran tells us:

"O you who believe! Fear Allah and let every soul look to what (provision) he has sent forth for the morrow. Yea fear Allah: for Allah is well-acquainted with (all) they you do." (59: 18)

Planning the morrow

We have to, plan for the upcoming day. A Muslim is ever aware of his or her final destination. For his, we are told to pray in the Qur'an:

"Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and defend us from the torment of the Fire!" (2. 201)

We are, thus instructed to plan to this life *and* the next. This requires wisdom and a sense of balance. By this planning, we develop our *iman*.

What do we plan for? Firstly, our time and money. These define our *dunya* (temporal life). If you don't plan for the *dunya*, it will plan for you. The Qur'an warns us:

"The mutual rivalry for piling up (the good things of this world) diverts you (from more serious things), until you visit the graves. But you soon shall know. Again, you soon shall know! Nol Were you to know with certainty of mind (you would beware!) You shall certainly see Hell Fire! Again you shall see it with certainty of sight! Then shall you be Questioned that Day about the joy (you indulged in)!" (at-Takathur, 102)

Thus, we are told to be aware of what direction our life is taking, reiterating the importance of planning and accountability in our lives.

How to plan for this?

In the Qur'an and Sunnah, we are told that thinking and reflection are characteristics of *iman*.

A Companion saw the Prophet get up in the middle of the night, and before *tahajjud* (night prayers) he prayed:

"Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day there are indeed Signs for men of understanding. Men who celebrate the praises of Allah standing sitting and lying down on their sides and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth:

"'Our Lord! not for naught have you created (all) this! Glory to You! give us salvation from the penalty of the fire. Our Lord! any whom you do admit to the fire truly you cover with shame and never will wrong-doers find any helpers!

'Our Lord! we have heard the call of one calling (us) to faith 'Believe your in the Lord' and we have believed. Our Lord! forgive us our sins blot out from us our iniquities and take to thyself our souls in the company of the righteous. (3: 190 - 193)

We see here the *dhikr* (remembrance) and *fikr* (thinking) of the Prophet. Allah answers his prayers in the next verses:

"So their Lord accepted of them (their supplication and answered,) 'Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, male of female.'" (3: 195)

We should realize that from our *Shahada* to Paradise, there is only struggle (*jihad*), the act of witnessing to the truth of our *iman*, by our actions. This is, in fact, our duty as Muslims. The Qur'an tells us:

"Thus have We made of you an Ummah justly balanced that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger a witness over yourselves..." (2: 143)

This verse lays out the duties of Muslims: *that your may be witness over mankind*. When we see the state of Muslims today, we realize that it is the result of us forgetting the mission we have been entrusted with; we have forgotten, in effect, the life of the Prophet.

Knowledge

One way to plan, to get away from ignorance, is to seek knowledge. We must, for example, embark on a personal quest to read and understand the Qur'an. Allah will ask *you*, and he warns you. "let every soul look to what (provision) he has sent forth for the morrow" (59: 18)

One way to be able to do this is to plan for the *dunya*, to control it and to make time for our Islamic learning.

Gaining knowledge is a personal duty; in fact, all responsibilities are personal in Islam: on the Day of Judgement, you will have no one but yourself to blame.

Strength and Planning

Strength, we learn, comes in Islam from the strength and realization of our *iman*, both in word and deeds.

So, just as we plan for the tangible things of this *dunya*, we should plan for the *akhira* (hereafter). We should pray to Allah, especially at night, make *du'a* (supplications), ask Allah for guidance, and plan.

"Let every soul look to what he has sent forth..."

Self-Accounting

As Muslims, we must do *ihtisab* (self-accounting). For example, instead of talking before you begin to pray, think about your actions since the last prayer.

Before you sleep, think about your day and what you did in it. Think, likewise, about what you plan to do.

You should translate this plan into a 'to-do' list that can be used as a basis of evaluating how well you are living up to your personal plan. Set yourself Islamic goals too. Decide that you will read a certain amount of Qur'an, read certain books, do certain good deeds, participate in certain Islamic work, and so on.

In Surah al-'Asr we are given the way to strengthen our *iman*. We realize that much of it is in collective life. We are to "join together in the mutual teaching of Truth and of Patience and Constancy."

Likewise, the Prophet, in a well-authenticated *hadith*, said: "A believer is a mirror of another believer." This is a deep and beautiful metaphor: mirrors tell it like it is. We are to remind each other, be true, and free from false show.

When we give them advice, which we must, we do so privately. This is mutually strengthening, and

(Continued on page 11)

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The Nature of Western Society

Abdullah Hakim speaks at Dawah Seminar on the society we live in

By Shireen Ahmed

Speaking at the Forum for Social Studies Dawah Seminar in Toronto, Sheikh Abdullah Hakim Quick touched on a number of points regarding Western Society.

The Concept of Change

He began with the concept of the prevailing change in society today. "...All throughout the Muslim world tremendous change is coming about and all the societies are in a state of strife. Whether it is from political, whether a social level, economic... whether the environment is turning against the society as promised by Allah (swt) - change is coming about, and change always brings a great movement."

The Western think-tanks have thousands of people gathering information from various information highways to help them with their decision making.

However, we as muslims, recognize that any information revealed to anyone is from Allah (SWT). "Allah has told us, that even if all the oceans were made into ink to write the words of Allah, they would be exhausted - they would never be able to even begin to touch the knowledge of Allah."

Change of Power

There is even a change of power in the world, according to Western scholars. They have isolated three major powers:

1) The Pacific Rim

2) The West

3) The World of Islam (Muslims by numbers alone constitute a major power)

Abdullah Hakim then questioned how Muslims would now react to the situations and challenges that we are facing now, which is now one of our greatest challenges.

The question of what happens after the victories, "when the real struggle begins against ego, personality, power, judging a person by an organization and not by their deen.." examples like these - how exactly do we respond to victory.

The example of the Prophet (pbuh) was given by Abdullah Hakim, "After the Quraish surrendered, the Prophet (pbuh) came in with his head bowed dowo in humility."

Many Muslims fail to realize how corrupt Western society is, "...acting as if Canada is some sort of Jannah on Earth"

It is after victory that Shaitan can delude the individual into the wrong kind of behavior, such as arrogance or pride, which was never seen in the Prophet (pbuh).

Some of the great scholars who, after winning their battles, gave up their power - also serve as great examples to us. These men showed humility when they had a great deal of power within their grasps.

Disease and Victory

Histonans have found victory was not always won through battles, but also through disease.

We were reminded of the hadith related by Abdullah bin Umar (r.a.a.) that the Prophet (pbuh) said "when indecency (especially sexual indecency) and corruption appears amongst a people and they do it openly - then diseases and famines appear amongst these people that they have never experienced before."

In this society, many diseases are facing the people such as AIDS, typhus, tuberculosis (TB), small pox.. protection from which is only from the Mercy of Allah (swt).

Many Muslims fail to realize how corrupt Western society is, "...acting as if Canada is some sort of Jannah on Earth" in the words of Abdullah Hakim.

But when looking at examples such as Gay Pride Day in Toronto [which took place the weekend before the Conference] drawing the largest gathering of this sort in North America, or that Stats Canada is reporting a significant drop in the number of marriages, while living 'common-law' has increased 50% in the past five years...

"One would hope that Muslims would realize Canada is not as perfect as they think."

Our Values

People were then warned to believe strongly in their values "We have the best examples and the best instructions on how to function."

It was related by Abu Hurairra (r.a.a.) that the Prophet (pbuh) said, "Decency and modesty is part of *iman* [faith], and iman will lead you to paradise, but vulgarity comes from crudeness, and crudeness leads to hell." (Tirmidhi, related by Ibn Abbas)

Abdullah Hakim gave the contemporary example of people swearing, which leads one into a crudeness of nature, which in turn leads the individual towards Hell.

"These are small things, but we have to begin with these small things." stated Abdullah Hakim Then he reminded the audience that according to a hadith narrated in Bukhari and Muslim, one of the worst of people on the day of judgement is one whom people avoided due to the fear of their crude nature.

We have to start small, to make ourselves and our families stronger, especially when living in Western society.

Abdullah Hakim closed with, "Surely this Earth belongs to Allah. He gives it to whom he pleases amongst his worshippers, and the best reward is for those who have taqwa."

Shireen Ahmed is a 'student' at the University of Toronto, Erindale College.

Reflections on Being a Muslim Graduate Student in Political Science

By Katherine Bullock

"Islamic fundamentalism is an unseemly element of civil society," said my professor.

Fellow students gasped with displeasure, the room erupted into cries of "No!" "How could you say that?!" and similar such exclamations.

A Muslim brother put up his hand and clearing his throat said politely, "Excuse me Professor, but we feel you need to clarify your terms. What do you mean by Islamic fundamentalism? What is civil society? What does it mean to be *unseemly*? I think I speak for almost all of us present..."

He looked around the classroom and got nods from the other brothers and sisters in the classroom to continue, "When I say that *we*...those of us here who are Muslim, at least..."

He glanced at the only non-Muslim in the classroom to gauge his reaction, but Cliff remained aloof, "that not only do we find such statements inaccurate, but offensive also."

Not Quite

The Professor coughed, also to clear his throat. Suddenly I heard a few snickers, and I looked around. Hmm, daydreaming again.

Everyone in the room was looking approvingly at the Professor; I was the only Muslim present. Should I protest his remark? How would I? How would he react? How would my fellow students react?

After all I had spent last week combating the deriding comment about the Islamic version of democracy - "One Person, One Vote, Once." I felt that everyone was getting sick of me constantly defending Islam. This was a seminar in Third World Politics, not a forum for discussions on Islam!

I kept quiet, annoyed at my cowardice. "But," I protested to Aisha later that afternoon, "there's only so much I can do single handed!"

She nodded quietly in agreement, though reluctantly. She always wanted me to stand up and fight more for the right of Muslims to be treated with self-respect.

Yesterday she had walked into our department's mailroom and interrupted two fellow women graduate students talking about me. "Why is she wearing that thing on her head?! Doesn't she know she is oppressed?!" The woman was saying it to someone I knew.

Her face burning, Aisha had valiantly tried to defend me. "You people don't know what you're talking about. She freely accepted Islam after much study, and freely put on the hijabl It is the best way to dress!" she added, flouncing out of the mail room.

On her way out she bumped into Sadia, Khadija and Malika, who were just leaving their international relations seminar. "It is so nice to have a Muslim professor, for a change," Sadia was remarking. "Aisha what's wrong?"

Someone knocked my elbow as they hurried past me down to the mail room. I looked for Aisha, Sadia, Khadija and Malika. Oh...My heart sank; daydreaming again. I sighed going into the mail room. I'm the only Muslim woman in the graduate programme.

Realities

The awkward-trying-to-be-polite reaction of one female professor echoed in my mind: "We don't often hear of a white, western educated woman converting to Islam."

I collected my mail and headed off to the International Student Centre so I could wash and be in time for prayer. At least there I have friends who don't think I'm oppressed, or brainwashed for believing in God and the Qur'an.

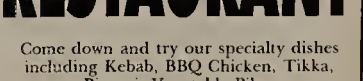
As I left Sidney Smith Hall I thought about how God had placed me amongst scholars who study Islam, scholars who have an influence in public policy and public opinion making. My current graduate friends will go on to become Professors in Universities, teaching a new generation of young adults about the Arab, African and Asian Muslim world.

If only there had been a few more Muslims in my seminar, and a significant number of Muslim women in hijab in my department, the Islamophobia would be less, or at least more challengrd. Wouldn't it be great if many of the new Professors were Muslims themselves? I wished and prayed for that day at prayer.

"Islam seems like such a wonderful religion," Michelle remarks to me as we leave a seminar on Third World Politics.....I dream on!

If you read the article, you know what Katherine Bullock studies.

AL-TAJ



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The Remembrance of Allah (Dhikr)

By Nesrideen Abdulrahman

"O ye who believe! remember Allah, with much remembrance; And glorify Him morning and evening."
(Qur'an, 33:41-42)

Dhikr (the remembrance of Allah) holds a high rank of importance in Islam. It has clear and distinct manners, which can be carried out in many different ways.

1) Importance of dhikr

"The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, used to remember Allah (SWT) in all cases and situations "(Dawud, Tirmidhi, Muslim); and Allah commands us to follow his example in the Quran.

In addition, Allah (SWT) does not only tell us to follow the example of the Prophet, but He personally addresses us in the Qur'an to remember Him (Allah) 'with much remembrance.' The word "much" is used to emphasize that *dhikr* is not only for specific times (after salat), but rather should be a continuous practice in our daily lives.

In a Hadith Qudsi, the Prophet reported that Allah said. "I (will respond according to) what my servant thinks of Me, and I am with him when he remembers Me. So if he remembers Me in secret, I will remember him in secret and if he remembers Me in a group, I will remember him in a better group." (Bukhari, Muslim).

Certainly, to gain Allah's friendship and for Him to remember you is a mercy and an honour. In addition, dhikr is easy to carry out; and the hearts of those who practice it become alive and their souls aware.

dhikr is also a shield against sin.

Dhikr develops *taqwa* (the consciousness of Allah) and *tawakkul* (trust in Allah), which are important aspects of *iman* (faith).

A man once told the Prophet, "The roads to good are many and I am unable to take all of them, so please tell me something to which I can hold fast, but do not overburden me lest I forget it."

The Prophet replied, " Make sure that your tongue is moist and supple with the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted."(At-Tirmidhi)

In another occasion, the Prophet said to his Companions, "The devotees have surpassed everyone." The companions asked him, "Who are these exceptional people, o Prophet of Allah?"

The Prophet replied: "Those men and women who remember Allah unceasingly."(Muslim).

Rewards and Formulae

The aforementioned is enough, with out any further reward, for us to carry out dhikr, although brings us great rewards. For example the Prophet said that the following formula,

SubhanAllah (Glory be to Allah), *Walhamdulillah* (Grace is due to Allah), *Wa la ilaha illaAllah* (there is no deity but Allah), *Wallahu Akbar* (and Allah is The Great),

was more liked by him than the whole world. He also said that this formula was the most liked of all utterances to God."(Muslim)

In addition, he (S.A.W.) also said "These two sentences, *Subhana Allahi, wa bi-hamdihi* (Glory be to Allah and Praise be to Him) and *Subhana Allah il-adhim* (Glory be to Allah, the Great), are light on the tongue but will be heavy in the Balance on the Day of Judgement and are loved by the Ever Merciful."(Muslim)

2) Manners of Dhikr

"And do thou bring thy Lord to remembrance in thy (very) soul, with humility and in reverence, with out loudness in words, in the morning and evening; and be not thou of those who are unheedful." (Qur'an, 7:205)

In order to obtain and maximize the reward of dhikr, one must follow the proper enquettes of dhikr.

First, one should make dhikr with humility, sobriety and reflection on the meaning of the *dua* (supplication).

When we converse with others, we expect to receive their attention. Therefore, we should give Allah the our undivided attention when we supplicate to Him.

Second, the voice must be lowered to avoid disruption of others making dhikr.

Furthermore, it is important to say the supplication in a moderate pace. Many times after salat we see others rushing when asking Allah (SWT) for forgiveness; one can see their fingers moving rapidly as they count the number of times they have completed *tasbeeh*.

It is better to supplicate to Allah (SWT) a small number of times observing the manners of dhikr, rather than rushing through a multitude of supplications: quality is more important than quantity.

Finally, one must observe cleanliness and respectability of clothes and of the place of dhikr.'

3) Types and Ways of Carrying out dhikr

Aside from the common supplication of the tongue, praising and thanking Allah, reading the Qur'an, etc., dhikr can take many other forms.

The first is the dhikr of the eyes, lowering your gaze *(ghadd al-basr)* and crying from immense feeling towards Allah (SWT).

The second is dhikr of the ears, listening to the Qur'an with the intention of receiving guidance, and not listening to what Allah dislikes.

On the other hand, dhikr of the hands can be helping the poor and doing good with your hands to please Allah.

Moreover, dhikr of the heart is, for example, to be sincere and to have firm belief. Finally, dhikr of the soul *(nafs)* can be having hope in the mercy of Allah, dependence on Allah without being extreme ("tie the camel and then depend on Allah"), and to believe in Allah with fear, hope and love respectively.

Thus, it is important to utilize as many body parts as possible in performing dhikr. These same body parts will be witnesses for you or against you in the Day of Judgement; dhikr is an act of worship that can bring joy for us on this day.

Forms of Dhikr

Furthermore, dhikr can also take many forms:

a) Regretting what you have done and making repentance *(tawba)*.

b) Abandoning your bad habits and making intentions to do good.

c) Careful reflection and thinking of Allah's creation *(tafakkur)*.

d) Seeking knowledge to please Allah.

e) Earning a living in a halal manner with out cheating anyone.

f) To have *taqwa*- to say Allah is watching over me and to have constant fear of Allah in your heart, is the best of dhikr.

In conclusion, Ibn Taymiyya said, **"Remembrance of Allah is to the heart what water is to fish. What happens to a fish when it is taken out of water?"**

Since dhikr provides sustenance for the heart and spirit, living with out it would be like depriving you body from food. Today, our dhikr has become worldly possesstions and pastimes. These pastimes are used to keep us away from remembering Allah and doing important things in life. Furthermore, since none of us knows when we will die and meet Allah to account for the time spent in this life, dhikr should be taken seriously.

Finally, I would like you to ponder over the question Allah poses in the Qur'an.

"Has not the time come for the believers that their hearts in all humility should engage in the remembrance of Allah and of the truth which has been revealed, And that they should not become like those to whom was given revelation aforetime, but time passed over them and their hearts grew hard, For many among them are rebellious transgressors!" (Qur'an, 57: 16)

Nasri is a tall Engineering student at U of Toronto.

ISLAMIC `AQIDAH - YOU AND YOUR BELIEF [PART 6]

Introduction to Categories of Tawhid & Explanation of Tawhid al-Rububiyyah

By Shaikh Faisal Abdur-Razak

`Aqiqah is the basic Islamic belief system. It essential for a Muslim to have a clear understanding of this.

6.1 Praise be to Almighty Allah, Lord of the entire Universe. In His Hand is the Dominion of the heavens and the earth. All Sovereignty belongs to Him, and all Praise is only for Him. All His prescribed Laws and what he has decreed are from His wisdom. He does whatever He wills and commands whatever he wishes.

I tesatify that there is none to be worshipped but Almighty Allah. He is One, He has no partners, and there is none like unto Him. And I testify that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger, He is the last and Seal of the Prophets, and the best of all creations. May the Peace and Blessings of Almighty Allah be upon him, his family, his companions, and all those who follow him until the Day of Judgement.

6.2 This is the sixth article in the series dealing with *Aqidah* or Islamic Creed. In the previous installment we discussed the importance of *Tawhid* and mentioned some of the ramifications of an incorrect understanding of this important concept which is the foundation of the Islamic Creedor *Aqidah*.

In this article we continue this discussion by introducing the three categories of *Tawhid*.

6.3 The Holy Qur'an states :

"Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the Guardian and Disposer of all affairs; To Him belong the keys of the Heavens and the earth .And those who reject the signs of Allah, It is they who will be in loss. Say: 'Is it some one other than Allah that you order me to worship, O you Ignorant ones?'

But it has already been revealed to you, -as it was revealed to those before you,- 'If you were to join (gods with Allah), truly fruitless will be your work (in life), and you will surely be among the losers.'

Nay, but worship Allah, and be of those who give thanks."[Qur'an, 39: 62-66]

"Allah ! There is no god but He, The Living, the Self-Subsisting, Supporter of all; No slumber can seize Him, nor sleep. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth. Who is there that can intercede with Him, except by His permission? He knows what is before them and what is after them, But they comprehend not anything of his knowledge save such as He wills. His Throne encompasses the heaven and the earth, And He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them, For He is the Most High, the Supreme in Glory." [Qur'an, 2: 255]

An Introduction to the Categories of Tawhid

6.4 *Tawhid* literally means *unification* or "making something one" or "asserong oneness" It comes from the Arabic word *wah-hada* which itself means to unite, unify or consolidate.

As Islamic terminology, *Tawhid* means the realizing and maintaining of Allah's unity in all of man's actions which directly or indirectly relate to Allah. It is the uncompromising belief that Allah is One, without any partner in His dominion and His actions.

Secondly, He is One, without similitude in His Names (essence) and attributes.

Thirdly, He is One in His Divinity and in Worship. These three aspects form the basis for the categories into which the science of *Tawhid* has been traditionally divided.

The three categories overlap and are inseperable to such a degree that whoever omits any one aspect has failed to complete the requirements of *Tawhid*. The omission of any of the above mentioned aspects of *Tawhid* is referred to as SHIRK or idolatry; the association of partners with Allah.

The Three Categories of Tawhid

6.5In his monumental work, *Sharh al-`Aqidah at-Tahawiyya*, Ibn Abdull `Izz al-Hanafi mentions the three categories of the science of *Tawhid* as follows :

6.5.1 Tawhid ar-Rububiyyah [Maintaining the Unity of Lordship]

6.5.2 Tawhid al-Uluhiyya [Maintaining the Unity of Allah's Divinity and His Worship]

This is also referred to as *Tawhid al-`Ibadah*.

6.5.3Tawhid al-Asmaa was-Sifaat [Maintaining the Unity of Allah's Names and Attributes]

6.6 The basis for these components are all implied in the verses of the Qur'an and in the explanatory statements of the Prophet (PBUH), and the statements of his companions

The necessity for this analytical approach to the principle of *Tawhid* arose after Islam spread beyond the boundaries of the Arabian Peninsular into Egypt, Byzantium, Persia and India and absorbed the cultures of those regions.

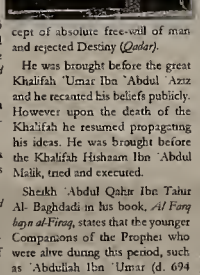
When the people of these countries accepted Islam, some of them retained remnants of their former un-Islamic beliefs. Wheo some of these new converts began to express in writings and lectures, their various philosophical concepts of God, confusion arose and the pure unitarian belief of Islam became polluted.

There were others who had outwardly accepted Islam but secretly worked to destroy the religion from within, due to their inability to openly oppose it militarily. This group began to actively propagate distorted ideas about Allah among the masses in order to tear down the first pillar of Iman and with it Islam itself.

Imam Ibn Hajar in his book, *Tahdheeb at-Tahdheeb*, states that the first so-called Muslim to express the position of man's absolute free-will and the absence of destiny (*Qadar*) was an Iraqi convert from Christianity by the name of Saussan. Saussan later reverted to Christianity but not before infecting his student, Ma`bad Ibn Khalid Al-Juhani from Basrah, with his deviant ideas.

Ma`bad spread the teachings of his master until he was caught and executed by the Umawiyyah Khalifah, `Abdul Malik Ibn Marwaan in the year 700 CE.

Sheikh Muhammad Ibn `Abdul Karim Ash-Sharastaani in his book, *Al-Milal wan-Nihal*, mentions another example of this deviant behaviour. Ghaylaan Ibn Muslim from Damascus studied under Ma`bad and propagated the con-



cept of absolute free-will of man and rejected Destiny (*Qadar*).

He was brought before the great Khalifah `Umar Ibn `Abdul `Azz and he recanted his beliefs publicly. However upon the death of the Khalifah he resumed propagating his ideas. He was brought before the Khalifah Hishaam Ibn `Abdul Malik, tried and executed.

Sheikh `Abdul Qahir Ibn Tahir Al- Baghdadi in his book, *Al Farq bayn al-Firaq*, states that the younger Companions of the Prophet who were alive during this period, such as `Abdullah Ibn `Umar (d. 694 CE) and `Abdullah Ibn Abi Awfaa (d. 705 CE), advised the people not to greet those who denied *Qadar* nor pray Salaatul Janazah for those of them who died. In other words, they considered them to be disbelievers.

Opposing Un-Islamic Concepts

6.7 As greater numbers of people entered Islam, and the culture of an increasing number of conquered nations was absorbed, the execution of apostates was no longer used to stem the rising tide heresy.

The task of opposing this rising tide of deviant, Un-Islamic ideas fell on the shoulders of the Muslim scholars of that period. And they rose to meet the challenge intellectually.

They systematically opposed the various alien philosophies by categorizing them and countering them with principles deduced from the Qur'an and Sunnah.

It was out of this defense that the science of *Tawhid* emerged with its precisely defined categories and components

This process of specialization occurred simultaneously in all other areas of Islamic Knowledge Therefore, as the categories of *Tawhid* are studied separately and in greater detail, it must be kept in mind that they are all part of an organic whole

Tawhid al-Rububiyyah (Maintaining the Unity of Lordship)

6.8.1 This category is based on the fundamental concept that Allah alone caused all things to come into existence when there was nothing. He sustains and maintains creation without any need from it or for it; He is the sole Lord of the universe and everything in it; and He does not share His sovereignty with anything or anyone.

In Arabic language the word used to describe this creator-sustainer quality is *rububiyyah*, which is derived from the root *rabb* meaning "Lord".

According to this category of *Tawhid*, since Almighty Allah is the only real source of power in existence, it is HE who gives all things the power to move and to change. Nothing happens in the universe except what He allows to happen

In recognition of this reality, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, used to often repeat the exclamatory phrase *la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah* (there is no might and no power except by Allah's will).

Qur'an Foundations

6.8.2 The basis for the *Rububiyyah* concept can be found in many Qur'anic verses. Almighty Allah says:

"Allah created all things and He is the Guardian on which all things depend." [Qur'an, 39: 62]

"And Allah created you and whatever you do." [Qur'an, 37:96]

"And no calamity strikes except by Allah's permission." [Qur'an, 64:11]

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him, further explained this concept in a Hadith when he said:

"Be aware that if the whole of mankind were to gather together to do something to help you, they would only be able to benefit you with something that Allah had already prescribed for you. And if they gathered together to do something to harm you, they would only be able to harm you with something that Allah had already prescribed for you."[At-Tirmidhi.]

Good and Bad Fortune

6.8.3 Subsequently, what man conceives as good fortune or misfortune are merely events predestined by Allah as part of the tests of this life. The incidents follow patterns set only by Allah. Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

"O you who believe, Surely among your spouses and your children are enemies for you, so beware of them." [Qur'an, 64 14]

That is, within the good things of this life there are severe tests of one's faith in God.

6.8.4 Similarly, in the terrible events of life there lies a test as is mentioned in the Qur'an:

"Surely We will test you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives, and the fruits of your work. but give glad tidings to those who are steadfast." [Qur'an, 2: 155]

Cause and Effect

6.9 Sometimes the patterns are recognizable, as in the case of Cause and Effect relationships, and sometimes they are not, as in the case when apparently good results from evil means, or bad results come from good means.Almighty Allah has explained that the wisdom behind these apparent irregularities is often beyond man's immediate comprehension due to his limited knowledge. Almighty Allah says:

"Perhaps you may dislike something which is really good for you; and it may be that you like something but it is bad for you, and Allah knows (what is best for you), and you know not."

[Qur'an, 2: 216]

Events in human lives which are seemingly harmful sometimes turn out to be for the best. And seemingly good things which people desire may turn out to be harmful.

Consequently, man's realm of influence in the course of events which make up his life is limited to the choice between options presented to him and not the actual outcome or result of his choice In other words, "man proposes and God disposes."

Iman: development

(Continued from page 8)

is one of the strengths of a community of believers. Such mutual reminding also keeps *us* on track, for we must practice what we preach.

The Qu'ran puts this beautifully:

"The believers, men and women, are helpers and protectors of one another; they enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil; they offer their prayers perfectly; they give their *zakah*; and they obey Allah and His Messenger." (9 71)

The Path

We should develop a constancy in our remembrance of Allah, through *du`a* and *dhikr*. We should seek to nurture and develop our love for Allah. Allah says in the Qu'ran,

"Those who have faith are overflowing in their love for Allah." (2: 165)

Thus, we have seen that *iman* can go up or down, and that the best way to increase it is to plan for tomorrow, and to check the plan. We must gain knowledge, and live according to our *Shahada* by being witnesses in our thoughts and actions.

"O you who believe! Fear Allah and let every soul look to what (provision) he has sent forth for the morrow. Yea fear Allah: for Allah is well-acquainted with (all) they you do." (59: 18)

Maulana Maududi, wrote two powerful books on this subject- *Witnesses unto Mankind: the Role and Purpose of the Muslim Ummah* and *Islamic Movement: Dynamics of Values, Power and Change* (published by Islamic Foundation).

Fauzi Rahbani was once compared to a Gulf War Scud missile: lots of energy, bad sense of direction. He considers this unfair...

TORONTO MSAs UNITED EVENTS UPDATE

MSA U of Toronto
(St. George)

Wednesday, September 13

Imam Siraj Wahaj speaks on **University Life for Muslims** at Medical Sciences Building, RM 3171. 5:30 - 8:00 pm

Friday, September 15

Free Lunch at the International Students Centre (33 St. George St, at College). Right after Juma (2:15 pm)

Friday, September 22 (TBC)

Welcome Back Dinner at Wetmore Hall (New College). To be confirmed... stay posted!

Sunday, October 8

MSA hosts the ICNA Zonal Conference, with many prominent speakers and a Qur'anic display, MSB Auditorium.

Prayer on campus

We pray at the ISC (33 St. George St; 3rd floor; 1:30, 5:15, maghrib time) and at the FIS Building (3rd floor, building North of Robarts).

Juma at Hart House (1:15pm.)

We have many **study circles**, a **Tutoring Service**, and lots more. .

For more info call Abdul-Rehman (905-569-3367) or Ramem (264-4770) or Shiraz (905-420-0854)

MSA McMaster

September 6 **ClubFest Day:** MSA displays, food and signup
September 20 **Welcome Back Dinner**
September 29 **Bowling Night**
Juma Location: Wentworth Lounge (1:30pm)
For more information: Yaser Khan (905-546-5400)

MSF York

For more information, call Anwaar Syed at (416-286-0460)

MSA U of Toronto
(Scarborough)

September 10 **Orientation BBQ** from 3 - 4:30pm at H-Wing Patio
September 10 **Orientation Sunday!** from 12 - 4:30
For more info, call Yatir Khan (724-4240) or Omara Alam (905-513-6831)

MSA U of Toronto
(Erindale)

For more information on the MSA, please contact: Mustafa Raji (905-272-6759)

MSA Ryerson

Thursday, September 21 Welcome Back Dinner (Jurgenson Hall)
Contact Person: Rayed Abu-Hantash (905-820-7494)

MSA BASKETBALL... IT'S BAAAACK
3rd Annual MSA ONTARIO Tournament

Two years ago, it was Islamic Foundation. Last March, it was Medina Mosque. This October, it will happen all again when teams from across Canada and Northeastern USA vie for the right to be called the "MSA Ontario Basketball Champions" - the most prestigious distinction in the MSA world. *(Or at least to our B-Ball fans - Ed.)*

MSA ONTARIO BASKETBALL

October 14-15, 1995
Toronto, Ontario

Up to 30 teams are invited to participate in this year's two-day tournament. We'll take care of the food and accomodation - you supply the team if you have what it takes.

Call 416-596-8939 or email iqbal.ahmed@utoronto.ca

Toronto MSAs United Personal Development Program

The purpose of the MSA Personal Development Program, which is open to all students in the Toronto area, is to present them knowledge and skills that will make them better Muslims and more effective Islamic workers on campus.

Speakers for future sessions include: Abdullah Idrees Ali, Abdullah Hakim Quick, Nazim Baksh and Muhammad Zahid. Sessions are designed to be interactive, and many will feature mini-workshops.

1. *What it Means to be a Muslim: The Faith in Action*
September 24 with Faisal Abu Jihad (UofT, Sanford Fleming RM 1101)
2. *Towards Building an Islamic Personality*
October 1995 (TBA)
3. *Islamic Da'wah in Theory an Practice*
November 1995
4. *Islamic Brotherhood: the Basis of all Muslim Relationships*
December 1995

IN THE NEW YEAR:
Enjoining the Good, Forbidding the Evil (Jan '96)
Gender Interaction in Islam (Feb '96)
Ethics of Disagreement in Islam (Mar '96)

A Toronto MSAs United project.

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